

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3 and 14-16 stand rejected, with claims 4-13 and 17-23 objected to in the outstanding Official Action. Claims 4 and 17 have been cancelled without prejudice and claims 1, 5-8, 10, 14 and 18-21 have been amended. Therefore, claims 1-3, 5-16 and 18-23 remain in this application.

The Examiner's acknowledgment of Applicants' claim for priority and receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents is very much appreciated. Additionally, the Examiner's consideration of the prior art contained in Applicants' previously submitted Information Disclosure Statement is very much appreciated.

On page 3, section 3 of the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner indicates that claims 4-13 and 17-23 contain allowable subject matter which would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Inasmuch as claims 4 and 17 depend from claims 1 and 14, respectively, Applicants have amended the independent claims to include the allowable subject matter of the dependent claims. Accordingly, Applicants have cancelled claims 4 and 17 and amended claims 1 and 14 to include the allowable subject matter limitations noted in the cancelled claims. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 14 are now in condition for allowance.

Applicants have also amended the dependency of claims 5-8 and 10 to depend from claim 1 directly and claims 18-21 and 23 to depend from claim 14 directly. In view of the above amendment, all remaining claims in the application contain allowable subject matter and should be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-3 and 14-16 stand rejected under 35 USC §102 as being anticipated by Moroney (U.S. Patent 6,711,684). Inasmuch as the allowable subject matter of claims 4 and 17

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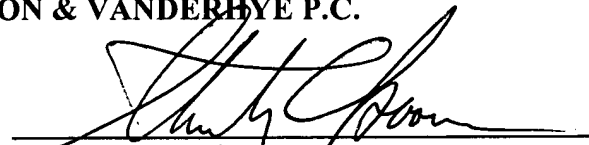
has been incorporated into independent claims 1 and 14, the rejection of claims 1 and 14 (and claims dependent thereon) has been obviated.

Having responded to all objections and rejections set forth in the outstanding Official Action, it is submitted that remaining claims 1-3, 5-16 and 18-23 are in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe a telephone or personal interview will facilitate allowance of one or more of the above claims, he is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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